

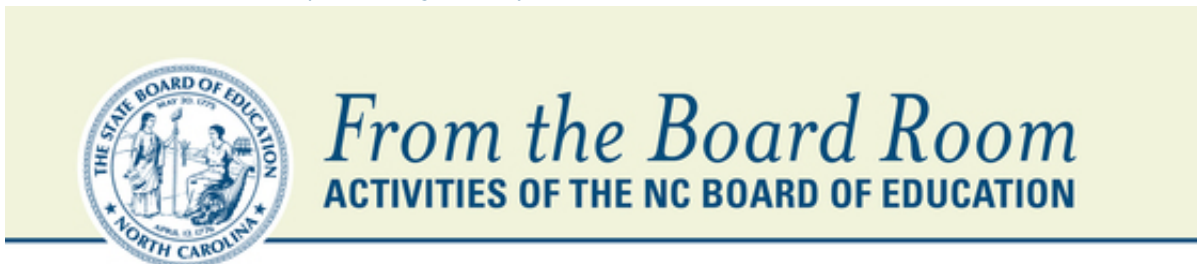
From the Board Room - January Edition

North Carolina Public Schools <NCPublicSchools@public.govdelivery.com>

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JANUARY 2016

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school students in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. You may view all State Board of Education member and advisor information [online](#). To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit the State Board of Education's [website](#).

Pilot Program to Raise Dropout Age from 16 to 18 Reviewed

Hickory Public Schools and Newton-Conover Schools have piloted a program to raise the dropout age from its current 16 to 18. This month the Board heard an update from both districts concerning their efforts in this area. The districts worked cooperatively to develop a district intervention process for students at risk. The process included home visits, an after-hours academy, Judges in Schools, virtual learning opportunities, career/job placement exploration, Core Academies, deferred prosecution and referrals to local mental health services, among other strategies.

The district leaders agreed that having the higher compulsory attendance age helped delay the dropout decision for students and made it a less impulsive decision, especially for some students who turn 16 during their ninth grade year. District leaders agreed that it would be beneficial to have the pilot continue through an entire school year for evaluation purposes. Both districts have relatively low annual dropout rates. Hickory's rate is 2.84 percent (2013-14) and Newton-Conover's is .92 percent (2013-14).

Virtual Charter School Update

This is the first operational school year for the two virtual charter schools that are now open to students statewide. In January, the Board received information about enrollments and withdrawals from these two schools.

North Carolina Connections Academy (at the end of its third month) had a total of 1,796 enrollments and an average daily membership of 1,445. Since the start of school, 351 students, or 20 percent of enrollments, have withdrawn from North Carolina Connections Academy.

North Carolina Virtual Academy's end of third month totals showed 1,713 total enrollments and an average daily membership of 1,377. North Carolina Virtual Academy saw withdrawals totaling 331 students, or 19 percent of enrollments, since start of school.

K-3 Literacy Profiled

The 10-member K-3 Literacy Division provides professional development and technical information to local K-3 classroom teachers and district English Language Arts directors and other staff. This team provides assistance to the districts and charter schools in implementing the state's comprehensive reading plan.

The goal of this work is to have a successful reading program in kindergarten through third grade as outlined in the Read to Achieve law. The work includes a comprehensive reading plan for reading instruction, a formative diagnostic assessment plan embedded in instruction, and teachers building a collaborative relationship with parents.

This model, which has been in schools since 2013-14, has resulted in systemic change for early grades reading instruction. The best resource for more information about Read to Achieve and early literacy is the division's "Livebinder" [site](#).

2016 Raleigh Dingman Award Winner and 2016 SBE Local Board of Education Advisor Welcomed

Dr. Christine Fitch, chair of the Wilson County Board of Education, was welcomed to the Board table in January.

She is the new Raleigh Dingman Award Winner recognized annually by the NC School Boards Association for outstanding service as a local school board member.

She will serve as an advisor to the Board for the next year.



SBE Highlights: A [checklist](#) of Board actions is posted every month at the conclusion of the meeting. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be held Feb. 3-4 in the 7th Floor Board Room, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC. Board materials will be available [online](#) by clicking on the Meetings tab.



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